COBBETT'S WEEKLY POLITICAL REGISTER.

VOL. IX. No. 6.] LONDON, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 1806. [PRICE 10D.

"If a new ministry should grow out of this, the first thing they should do, is, to make an inquiry, a "solemn inquiry, into the state of the nation, and next, in a concise and striking statement, to promulgate, "in a way calculated to carry it to every cottage in the kingdom, the result of such inquiry; so that no one "may be ignorant of the difficulties which they will have to encounter; for, without this precaution, they "will, in the minds of the people, have to answer for the unavoidable consequences of all the follies and "all the crimes of their predecessors."——POLITICAL REGISTER, 24 Nov. 1804.

SUMMARY OF POLITICS.

NEW MINISTRY.——After some time spent in the removing of certain difficulties with regard to the Duke of York's power over the army, the arrangement of the new cabinet was finally settled on Sunday last, and the persons to compose it are the following:

LORD GRENVILLE, first Lord of the Treasury, and Premier, of course.

MR. FOX, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

EARL SPENCER, Secretary of State for the Home Department.

MR. WINDHAM, Secretary of State for the War Department and for the Colonies.

MR. GREY, First Lord of the Admiralty.

EARL MOIRA, Master General of the Ordnance.

EARL FITZWILLIAM, President of the Council.

LORD VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH, Privy Seal.

MR. ERSKINE, Lord Chancellor.

LORD HENRY PETTY, Chancellor of the Exchequer.

LORD ELLENBOROUGH (the Lord Chief Justice) to have a vote in the cabinet.

This is the cabinet. The other appointments are, many of them, not yet actually made; and, it will, therefore, be better to defer giving a list of them, until it can be given with a certainty of correctness.—— Much has been said, in the prints employed by the Pitt ministry, against the principle of *exclusion*, upon which, they assert, the new ministry has been formed, and which has excluded, say they, all "Mr. Pitt's friends." But, when we disapproved of the principle of exclusion, the exclusion of *what* was it that we meant? The exclusion of *great talents* and *great weight of public character*. This was not only what we *meant*, but what we distinctly *expressed*; what we have uniformly expressed; and what has now been strictly adhered to; for, where are the talents, or the weight of public character, to be found amongst the tame and servile followers of Mr. Pitt, or amongst those intriguers, who were at once his masters and his slaves? His masters at St. James's and his slaves at Whitehall? Where are we to look for the proof of talent or of character amongst them? Is it in their measures that we are to seek for it? Is it in the force they have exhibited since their leader's decease? Is it in their acknowledged, their openly-acknowledged, incapacity to carry on the affairs of the state; or in the opinions of the people, which so loudly anticipated that acknowledgment? But, supposing that talent had not been wanting amongst them. Was there nothing else to operate against their participation of power? Were they to act upon the principle of exclusion themselves; to persevere in it to the last possible moment of holding their places; and, when, by no trick whatever, they could hold on another day, were they to say, "come; let us all be "friends; let harmony abound; let there "be *no longer* a principle of exclusion; let "us all be confounded with one another, "and let every man have his share?" Such a pretension was truly worthy of that presumptuous, that upstart, that insolent race, which has, to the disgrace of the country, so long been protected and cherished, while every man of real worth has been treated as an outcast. The rejection, the punishment, however, of those who had themselves hung on to a system of exclusion, is, though perfectly just, and though essentially necessary, by way of example, a consideration of much less weight than that of avoiding every thing that would tarnish the character, that would excite suspicions as to the integrity, of the new cabinet; and, I put it to the reader, what he would have thought of a cabinet, that should have been in part composed, or that should have admitted into the offices of state out of the cabinet, any, nay any one, of those persons, who, through thick and thin, supported Mr. Pitt in his measures for the screening of Lord Melville? I put it to him, whether he would have expected any thing just or salutary from such a cabinet? Would he have had any confidence in its honour or

its integrity? And, would not the people have been plunged into despair, at seeing, that, though a change had taken place; though the men, on whom they had most relied, had come into power; yet, that they were so accompanied as to forbid the hope, that any reformation of the crying abuses would take place? The question of Lord Melville it was, in fact, that produced the change. It was the developement of the transactions in the Treasurer of the Navy's department, together with Mr. Pitt's participation therein, and his *compelled* endeavours to screen Lord Melville; these it was that shook his power to its very foundations, and which would, as he must have clearly foreseen, have completely overset it before the end of the present session of parliament. To say nothing, therefore, upon the want of principle that would have been so glaring in the introduction of any of his supporters into the present ministry, the want of policy would have been such as, at first glance, to excite universal contempt. In fact, there can be no reason urged in favour of the admission of the thorough-paced adherents of Mr. Pitt, that might not, with equal propriety, be urged in favour of admitting Lord Melville himself, who, had it not been for the discoveries of the Tenth Report, would, at this hour, have been the first minister of the crown.——The many important consequences of this great change in the councils of the crown will, day after day, be perceived and felt by the people, and will, there is every reason to hope, be such as will finally restore us to our former state of freedom and happiness, at home, and of security from abroad. If no other good were produced by it; if it were possible that it should come alone, the mere turning of the channels of honours and rewards is a good of no small magnitude. There has, in this respect, been an ungenerous and scandalous monopoly amongst the most base and despicable part of the community. To be known to possess talents, or independence of mind, has been to be marked out as an object of neglect, if not of persecution. Weak and base, but cunning creatures, have long usurped and possessed whatever the public had to bestow upon talents and integrity, whether in church or in state, whether in the law, or in any other of the higher walks of life. A system the first maxim of which was to keep down genius, public-spirit, and independence, must necessarily produce their contraries. The seeds once sown, the harvest could not fail to be abundant. It has been abundant indeed; for, never, in the whole world, was there before seen degeneracy, of every sort, pushed on to such an extent as that which has, until now, prevailed in England. We have submitted to, pay we have silently borne, and have patiently heard justified, oppression such as, merely to have heard it named, would have excited indignation and outrage in those of our fathers who died only twenty years ago. Hundreds of provisions, imposing burdens and restraints upon us, the very least of which would have formerly set the country in a flame, have passed as a mere matter of course; and, if, perchance, any one raised an objection, though but in point of form, he was instantly silenced with a cry of disloyalty or disaffection. Many, very many indeed, of the old land-marks of liberty and of law have, one after another, been gently, imperceptibly, but most effectually, removed; and we have, in numerous instances, been exposed a helpless prey to the greedy upstarts, who have been engendered in, and cherished and protected by, that system of rule, which they repaid by their corrupt support.——But, such, unhappily, have been the consequences of this system; such is our present situation; that, even from a ministry, selected according to the unanimous wish of all the virtuous part of the people, we have no foundation, whereon to build a hope of *speedy* recovery. Much will certainly be done; much has already been done; the bare knowledge of the fact, that an *important change* has taken place, has infused somewhat of spirit into the public mind. But, there is so much to do, in order to bring us back to the state in which we were twenty years ago; which ever way we look, there are so many and such formidable difficulties; and, without measures that would call into action all the hostility of popular cupidity (which, in *my* opinion, ought, nevertheless, to be risked), there is so imperious a necessity for not only continuing, but for adding to, the burdens and the vexations of the people; so large and so terrible is the legacy of troubles left by Mr. Pitt to his successors, that it would be to delude the people to encourage them to hope, that the day of their delivetance is at hand. In looking forward to a change, such as that which has now taken place, and which, without the intervention of the hand of death, I confidently expected to see take place during the present winter, I have always thought, that the very first act of a new ministry should be, to form committees of inquiry in both Houses of Parliament, or a joint-committee of the two Houses, wherein to make, and whence to promulgate, a true statement of the affairs of the country, foreign, colo-

nial, and domestic; and, if this precaution be not taken, to me it seems but too certain, that the neglect will, at no very distant day, become a subject of deep regret, and, perhaps, of the severest mortification. Recollection of the past, especially in times of trouble, is seldom of long duration; and, the duration is the more likely to be short, in proportion as the ideas of the facts are confused. We all now know, and most deeply feel, that our country is in the greatest danger; that, as to our relation with foreign powers, we are covered with disgrace; that our burdens and our humiliations are such as we never before heard of: but, how long will this be remembered? By the people in general how long will this be remembered, under a necessary increase of burdens, and amidst the never-ceasing assertions of the partizans of the Pitt system, that, if their leader had continued alive and in power, the burdens, the sufferings, and the humiliations, now to be apprehended, would not have come upon us? Men conversant in public affairs will not be deceived by such assertions; but, it will require much to prevent this deception from prevailing amongst the great body of the people, plyed, as they will be, with the wailings of the "blood-"suckers," and, to prevent these wailings will demand a continuance of all that mass of corrupt means, by which the present calamities have been produced, and without the extirpation of which it would be folly bordering upon insanity to hope for any real and permanent good.——To make, therefore, a true and full representation, to put such a representation upon record, to promulgate it so that it should be familiar to the mind of every man in the country is, in my opinion, absolutely necessary, not only to the reputation of the new ministry, but to the support of their power. This representation should be a fair one; it should tell, not only the truth, but the whole truth. Were I concerned, in the making of it, I would begin with the CHURCH, and I would show, that, from an injudicious, not to say a corrupt use of power, in the heaping of benefices and dignities upon persons and families devoted to the ministry, the establishment has been, and is, daily sinking in the eyes of the people, who, deserted by their pluralist pastors, and left, in but too many instances, without any resident pastor at all, and not without a fair justification upon the ground of piety, exchanged the church for the meeting-house, where they find, at least, diligent earnestness in the ministry; and hence has arisen a schism including a million and a half of the people of England and Wales, while, as to the property of the church, and, of course, the influence of the legitimate aristocracy, a diminution is, from the same cause, daily taking place, by the means of the almost forced compositions, introduced and continued by the convenience and the example of the non-resident incumbents, to whom, as their parishioners cannot see the just reason of paying tithes, is to be ascribed all those grudgings and heart-burnings, all that inward hatred and outward disrespect to the clergy, which now seem to threaten the total overthrow of the establishment, and which, as its least possible evil, cannot fail to render men more indifferent than they otherwise would be with regard to the defence and the independence of their country. ——Of the state of the NAVY we may be proud. It is, with such a correction of abuses as may easily be accomplished, and with a great extension of the means of providing for disabled and worn-out seamen, which extension would present very few difficulties; with these improvements, the navy is exactly what we must wish it to be. But, the ARMY! Who shall make it, not what one could *wish*, but what we cannot exist in safety without? If any man can do this, I should expect it from the wisdom and the zeal of Mr. Windham. But, is it *possible?* After all the tampering; after all the balloting; all the nonsense with volunteers and parish-officers; after bounties of 50 guineas a man even for service for a limited time; after all this, is it in the mind of man to devise a scheme, by which a permanent military force can be raised and kept up in this country? I certainly think, that it is possible; I think that an army, such as we stand in need of, *can* be raised and maintained; but, I am by no means certain, that the measures necessary, absolutely necessary, thereunto, will, or can be adopted, in the present state of men's minds, full as they are with notions of trade, and obstinate as they are in their preference of every thing hostile to the bestowing of privileges and immunities upon the soldier. It is, by all men of discernment, clearly perceived, that, within these few years, Europe, and particularly France, has undergone a complete moral revolution; that the age of commerce is going by; that arms are now to predominate; that we, too, must become a military people, or become nothing as an independent nation; that our choice lies between a military nation and a nation of slaves; that this is the simple alternative, slavery and the continued predominance of commerce, or freedom and arms. All this is clearly perceived; but, as the drunkard and glutton,

goes on, from dinner to dinner, with disease in his frame and death before his eyes; so I fear, I greatly fear, that this besotted, this pelf-loving nation will go on in its present course of destruction. There does not appear to me to be energy enough left for the exertion absolutely necessary to recovery. Men *talk*, indeed, about "making a good "army;" but, when the *means* are pointed out, my fear is, that the nation will say, "it is too late; rather than encounter this, "let us die quietly." First, perhaps, it will look to *peace*. Peace will be easily obtained; but, when we contemplate the situation of the Continental powers, and particularly that of France, is there any man living that can hope for a *secure* peace, until we have got an army? Mr. Fox is come with great talents; but, he is come too late to do what such a man might have done a year or two ago. He may, and, doubtless, he will, produce a great change in our relations with certain of the powers upon the Continent; but, he can do nothing effectual, until we have a real army. We must *begin* there. There is no *talking* to the enemy without it. And, even if we could obtain a tolerable good peace, can it last a year without an army, and can that army be raised in time of peace, to say nothing about the raising of it being a pretext, on the part of the enemy, for a renewal of the war? And yet, how is the army to be raised without a total change in the present system; and will not this be objected to by some, merely because we are at war? In short, turn which way you will, difficulties of every sort present themselves to the accomplishment of this great, this primary object.——In the department of FINANCE (supposing the funding system to be persevered in) Lord Henry Petty, though assisted, and, perhaps, directed, by the great talents of Lord Grenville, will find difficulties, which no man ever before had to encounter. Every one witnessed the embarrassments of last year. Every one was ready to pronounce the source of taxation to be exhausted, and the assertion was echoed back by the unanimous voice of the ground-down, the teazed, and harrassed people. Yet, must there be found new taxes, and that too to a much greater amount than last year. They *must* be found, and must be raised too. The score upon the Continent is not yet paid off. We shall be compelled to defray the expenses of Napoleon's campaign. Another large addition to the funded debt; a further creation of bank-notes; a further and a further depreciation of the paper-money. All these must take place; and, it should never be forgotten, that they will be the unavoidable consequences of the measures of Mr. Pitt and his underlings. This should be *stated* too. It should be made known to the kingdom; for, if, according to the old practice, the Chancellor of the Exchequer should choose to represent the finances of the country in a *prosperous* state, he will take upon himself all the responsibility for the continuation of a state of prosperity. But, it is in vain to talk about *prosperity*; it is in vain to endeavour any longer to disguise the truth; there are two hundred thousand men in the country who have now seen to the bottom; every day makes an addition to the number; and, to attempt to keep up the deception, even if it were not criminal, would be the excess of folly. As connected with the department of finance, we must, too, remember the state of the *poor*. Upwards of *six millions* a year are now raised upon the parishes to be dealt out in aid of those means by which the labourer obtains his bread; and of persons receiving this aid there are upwards of a million. *All*, all, the labourers, having families, are now *paupers!* This is a new state of things; a state of things which has been produced by the funding and taxing system, pushed to an extreme. Let us not be answered, by the observations, that there must be poor, that there always has been, and that there always will be, in every state of society in every country in the world. We know there must be poor; we know that some must be very poor; we know that some must be maintained, or assisted, at least, either by the parish or by voluntary alms; but, is there any one who will deny, that this is a new and most deplorable state of things, which has rendered *all* the labourers, having families, paupers? The plain fact is, that a man with a wife, and with four children that are unable to work, cannot now, out of his labour, possibly provide them and himself with the means of living. I do not mean, that he cannot live *comfortably*, for, to comfort, such men have long ago bid farewell; but, I assert, and am ready to prove, that he cannot provide them, without parish aid, with a sufficiency of food, not to *satisfy* their cravings, but to *sustain life*. And, will any one say that this state of things is such as England ought to witness? Will even Old Rose, wallowing in the luxury of eighteen thousand a year drawn from the public purse, say that nothing ought to be attempted to alleviate these sufferings? There are hundreds of thousands of the people of England who never taste any food but bread and vegetables, and who scarcely ever know what it is to have a

full meal even of these. This is *new:* it was not so in former times: it was not so even till of *late* years: the causes are obvious, and they ought to be removed. I know, that, to remove them is not the work of a day. There must be time, and even a long time, allowed for it; but, the new ministry should lose no time in convincing the people, that they perceive, and that they wish to alleviate their sufferings; that they sincerely wish to restore the labourer to something like life; for, in his present pining famishing state, it may, almost without a figure, be said, that, "in the midst of life he is in "death." That this is not an exaggerated picture; that it does not proceed from thoughtless feeling or from a base desire of currying favour with the rabble, will, I think, be readily believed by any one who will but bestow a single minute in contemplating the situation of the agricultural labourer. His weekly wages (for I shall suppose him *never to lose a day's work*, either from recreation or *sickness)* is, upon an average 12 shillings, putting it at the very highest. The average price of the quartern loaf is eleven pence. Upon an average it is, indeed, much more; but, let us take the very lowest. Here, then are the means of purchasing 58½ pounds of bread in a week, which is a little more than 8¼ pounds a day for a *working* man, his wife, and 4 children! Absolutely not enough to support life. *Nothing* for drink; nothing for clothing; nothing for bedding, for household goods, for fuel, or for house rent! The evident conclusion is, that some of them must die, unless they are supported in existence by the parish, or by voluntary alms. "Well," some overgorged upstart will say, "and what matter is it, so that they are "supported, whence the support comes?" The matter is this, that the labourers are humbled, debased, and enslaved. The tendency of the funding and taxing system is, carried to its extreme, to draw the produce of the labour into unnatural channels, into the hands of upstart cormorants, and to deal it back again in driblets, under the name of relief or of charity, just to support the life of those from whose pores it has been drained. And thus is the nation debased; thus, without any direct abolition of the liberties of the common people, have these liberties been destroyed, or, at least, suspended. I repeat, that this terrible evil cannot be, all at once, removed; but, I also repeat, that, in order to convince the people, that their situation is known to and felt by their rulers, the new ministry should make some specific declaration upon the subject; and that, with all convenient speed, they should adopt measures for relief. In the mean while (and this is the point which I have, at present, principally in view), I conjure the new Chancellor of the Exchequer not to imitate his predecessor in making an annual boast about the *prosperity*, the *flourishing* state, of the country. From him we should hope for, and, indeed, from him I do confidently expect, a *true* picture of our financial concerns; an unvarnished statement of our internal affairs; and I as confidently expect, from the wisdom of the ministry and the public-spirit of parliament, an adequate remedy. It must be slow in its operation. Criminal indeed would it be in any one to endeavour to propagate the opinion, that it can possibly be speedy; all that we want is a foundation for hope, that something will be done in due time; this is all that is now wanted to satisfy the people, to cheer them, and to encourage them to make those exertions that are so necessary to the preservation of our independence.——In the department of FORREIGN AFFAIRS, usually so denominated, all that can be hoped for is, an endeavour to regain the confidence of the few remaining states which are not subdued, or which are not ranged in battle against us. With the United States of America Mr Pitt has left us a dispute not easily settled, without an abandonment, on our part, of much of that which we have heretofore contended for and maintained. A pretty equal mixture of arrogance and imbecility, in our ministers, has produced this dispute; but, it is by no means certain, that contrary qualities in their successors will insure a favourable termination of it.——In our COLONIES what circumstance that presents a difficulty does not exist? The West India colonists have complaints, and just complaints too, of long standing. No satisfactory explanation has yet taken place. The wound has been healed over and has broken out a fresh, time after time; and, from the new ministry will, in this respect, be expected much more than it is immediately in their power to do. The intercourse with the United States is a subject of great importance; yet, without some measure, some *general* measure, with regard to it, it is not easy to perceive how the present imposts can be continued upon West India produce. In consequence of restraints and imposts, both operating at *once*, and with a degree of force so far beyond the power of resistance, the islands have been reduced to a state almost of desperation. The effect has been greater than that of the funding system at home. The real property has, in a great proportion, passed from the

hands of the former possessors into those of merchants and factors and guarantees here. The fund-dealers in London hold the plantations by mortgage, and the nominal planters are, for the far greater part, little better than their bondsmen. In this unnatural, this odious state of things, with a country inhabited by men, who once were the sole possessors, but who are now little more than mere renters of the land, is there not every danger to be apprehended; and yet, where is the *remedy*? Where is, not the power to enforce, but where is the man to propose it? ——In the East Indies is the prospect more consoling? There, on the contrary, the difficulties and dangers lie so thickly sown, that it bewilders one but to look at them. The famous bill, by the means of which the Pitts and Dundasses scaled the walls of power, has, as Mr. Burke predicted it would, produced consequences which the thoughtless people will now smart under. To talk of the oppressing, the insulting, and the plundering of the Princes of India cannot be expected to have much effect amongst a people, who made not a single remonstrance upon the subject of the capture of the Spanish frigates, and the subsequent appropriation of their treasure, without a previous declaration of war; but, as this same people may possibly be alive to the demands of money *from themselves*, for the purpose of carrying on wars against the princes of Hindostan, information must be given them upon the subject of those demands; and, if this information be not given, in the most clear and full manner, by the new ministry, they will be greatly wanting both to the country and themselves. The people hear of great fortunes being made in the East; they hear of plunder enormous, and they see the plunderers come and elbow them from their homes; but, they never appear to perceive, that any part of this plunder is, either first or last, drawn from their own estates or their labour. They seem to think, that there are great quantities of goods and of gold and precious stones in India; and, the only feeling which the acquirers of these excite, seems to be that of envy, and, in some instances, of emulation. But, that this proceeds from a gross error would, in the two millions lately paid to the East India Company out of the taxes of the nation, have been clearly demonstrated, had not our system of finance been such as to keep in darkness, upon this point, men otherwise well-informed. *Now*, however, the demands upon the taxes must, for the [illegible] India be such as will, I [illegible] eyes, especially if [illegible] promulgate an authentic statement of the nation's affairs. Thirteen years ago a charter, by the influence of Mr. Pitt and his colleague Dundas, was granted to the East India Company, whereby were secured to the said company of merchants certain rights of sovereignty in, and, with some exceptions, an exclusive trade with, those countries in Asia, which we, taking them all together, call the East Indies. As the foundation of their firm, or partnership, of trade, this company were allowed by the Charter, to create a quantity of stock; that is to say, to make loans, in the same way that the ministry do, and to pay annually, or quarterly, in dividends, interest upon the amount of these loans. The company became, in fact, a sort of under government, having its loans, its scrip, its debt, or, more properly speaking, its funds, or, still more properly, its engagements to pay interest to a number of individuals. The paper, of whatever form it may be, which entitles the holder to demand this interest, or these dividends, is called *East India Stock*, the principal of which has now been augmented to the sum of 12 millions sterling; and, the holders of this stock are called *East India Proprietors*. The sources, whence the means of regularly discharging the interest upon the stock were to be derived, were, of course, the profits of the trade which the company should carry, but, aided by the revenue which they were authorised to raise from their territory, the defence and government of which were, however, placed, in some sort, under the controul of the mother government at Westminster. Thus set out in the world this company of sovereigns, furnished, at once, with dominions, subjects, taxes, and a funded debt. But, supposing the measure (which I do only by way of illustration) to have been, in other respects, just and politic, it certainly would have been neither, not to have bound these sovereigns to pay the nation something, or, more properly speaking, to contribute something towards the taxes, by way of consideration for the immense advantages to be derived from the exclusive trade of a country, while the nation might be called upon, as it has been, to defend in a naval war, and which must, at any rate, be defended on the land-board by troops drawn, in part at least, from the population of the kingdom. It was, therefore, provided, that the company, during the continuance of its charter, which was to be for twenty years (thirteen of which have now nearly expired), should pay into the Exchequer 500,000*l.* sterling a year, and that, upon all the money not so paid, an interest should arise and accumulate, at the rate of

fifteen per centum.—Such were the principal engagements, on both sides, under which this company started. The nation has fulfilled its engagements, and that, too, at an enormous expenditure both of men and of money; and, while the company has been enjoying all the advantages of an exclusive trade, and all the receipts of a territorial revenue; while hundreds and thousands of persons, concerned in that trade, have amassed fortunes so great as to overshadow and bear down, not only the clergy and the country gentlemen, but even the ancient nobility of the kingdom, not one penny, (since the *first* year) has the company ever paid into the Exchequer of the stipulated half-million a year; and, what is still more glaringly unjust, and more galling to the burdened people, two millions of our taxes have already been granted to this company, wherewith to pay the dividends upon their stock; and, such has been the management, and such is now the state, of the company's affairs, that we need not be at all surprised if another million be called for from us, during this present session of parliament! For the *causes* of this state of the company's concerns; for the reasons why they have not been 'eld to their engagements; why the act of parliament has thus been treated as if it had been passed merely as a job; why we have been called upon to pay to, instead of to receive from, this company of trading sovereigns; let the eulogists of Mr. Pitt's memory; let Mr. Canning, Old Rose and Colonel Pattypan; let Lord Melville, with his 2,000l. a year pension from the company (who are so *poor* as to come to us for money); let the Directors, those managers of the company's affairs, and those staunch advocates of the minister that suffered the act to lie unenforced against them; let Lord Wellesley, who has so long been the governor general of India: why the act has not been enforced, why the law has been thus shamefully set at nought, let these persons tell. But, the question which we have to ask, is, how will the new ministry meet the difficulty which here presents itself in so formidable a shape? Will they *tax us*, in order to raise money to discharge the debts of this company? In addition to the 27 millions annually, which we have to pay to the fund-holders, the loan-mongers, and their inferior speculators; in addition to this, will they load us with the annual interest upon twelve millions of India stock, and that, too, without a previous full and fair inquiry into the causes, whence the demand upon us has arisen? No: they certainly will not. From them we have not to fear so unjust, so oppressive, and so odious a measure. Yet, what are they to do? Are the East India fund-holders to go unpaid? These are questions that every man should put to himself, and upon which he should, without delay, make up his mind to an answer. But, not a moment should be lost, by the new ministry, in making and promulgating a true statement relative to Indian affairs. These affairs *must* now have attention bestowed upon them. Mr. Francis, in his most able exposition of the delusions of Mr. Dundas and Lord Castlereagh (See Register, Vol. VI. p. 429) has said, that the time would come when these affairs would make men attend to them, though against their will. That time is now arrived. The call for money out of our taxes, out of our incomes, out of our land and our goods and our labour, is at hand; and, will the parliament grant that money, will it tax us to pay the debts of these traders, without a previous inquiry? No: again I say, no: but, yet, difficulty upon difficulty occurs; and, therefore, wisdom, self-preservation to the ministry, to their useful power as well as to their reputation, demand a full and a widely promulgated statement, upon this, as well as upon all the other affairs of the nation, previous to their imposing a single shilling of new tax. In the Morning Post of the 6th instant, and side by side with a lying epitaph on Mr. Pitt, there is an article, the insertion of which is evidently paid for, in defence of some supposed charge against the Marquis Wellesley, and which article is introduced by the following curious observation: "The abuse of the freedom of "the press, which, from liberty too often "degenerates into licentiousness, is one "amongst the many proofs, that a general "good may become a partial evil. The "abused and groundless *calumnies* lately "published against the administration of "the Marquis Welleslesley; &c. &c." So, so! But, does this grave gentleman recollect, that he is not in Calcutta? There, indeed, the freedom of the press is not abused much! It would, however, be to discover too sanguine a disposition to hope, that, in this *licentious* country, such perfect freedom from *abuse* of any thing will be found. *We* have no *Censorship* established as yet; and, there is some ground to suppose, that we shall be a little more secure than we lately have been, in the exercise of the liberty of the press. No, no: let no dog bark when the Marquis Wellesley passes; but, let us speak and publish *truth* about him, if such publications should become necessary, and that they will

become necessary I am fully persuaded, in spite of the *great dinner*, which, I hear, it is in contemplation to give him. That the noble Marquis has done all that is right, and nothing that is wrong, I am, at present, far from denying; but, if Mr. Paull does not most scandalously desert his duty; if he does not eat his words, uttered in parliament, we shall, all of us, soon be able to form a correct opinion upon the subject.——In returning from these remarks, which have been extorted by the indirect threat above quoted, and which threat, let us hope, every man concerned with the press will treat with disdain, I cannot refrain from once more expressing my anxious wish, that the new ministry, the selection of whom has given such great and universal satisfaction, will neglect none of the precautions which I have pointed out. Great indeed is their stock of character and of talent; but, were it ten thousand times as great as it is, can it possibly bear up against the odium of a large *unaccounted-for* addition to the present burdens of the people? I am persuaded it cannot. New taxes (supposing the interest still to be paid upon the funded debt) must be lain on, to an amount much greater than that of the taxes imposed last year; and, whatever any one may think to the contrary, the cry of the people will be, that, instead of better ministers, these are worse than the last. I have heard, and I hope it is true, that the ministers do intend to institute a solemn inquiry into the state of the nation; but, this inquiry, if the result of it be merely printed and piled up amongst the mountanous heaps of folios from the office of the king's printer, will be of very little use. The *public* will never see it. They will know nothing of it; and it will produce no more practical good than the strings of unmeaning resolutions, on the subject of finance, which, after having answered the amiable purpose of keeping some one for several weeks out of harm's way at home, generally drop in to prolong, for a few minutes, the yawnings of a House of half a score assembled to pass laws in the dog-days. This is not what it *now* wanted. We have new men; and the times imperiously demand a new spirit. Again and again, for it never can be too often repeated, I conjure the new Chancellor of the Exchequer, as he values his fame, as he loves his country, not only to refrain from all boastings about *prosperity*, but to tell the people the whole truth; to apprize them fully of what they have to expect; to attempt delusion, even were it not dishonourable, would be useless: men have begun to *think*, and, in thinking they seldom make a retrogade movement. There are, I again assert, two hundred thousand men in the kingdom who have seen to the bottom, and whose eyes are now anxiously fixed upon the new Chancellor of the Exchequer. His very first speech upon the subject of finance will teach them what they have to expect from him. No caution, no passing over in silence, will deceive them, or suspend, for one moment, their decision. If his predecessor could no longer delude them, how can he hope to do it? But, I hope, and confidently rely, that he entertains far different views, and, I trust, that whatever my expressions may contain too much of earnestness will be attributed to my anxiety for the success of himself and his colleagues, and not to any want of confidence in their talents or their integrity.

The remarks, which it was my intention to have made, upon the proceedings, in parliament and out of it, relative to the *debts* and the *monuments*, must be postponed till my next.——In a subsequent page will be found a letter upon the *Fate of the Funds*. I beg the reader to turn to it, and he will be at no loss to see how far it is an *answer* to what he has read upon the subject in the Register of the 25th of January. It would, however, be injustice to the "blood-"suckers" to suppose that they have not more able advocates than this; and therefore, I take this opportunity of inviting them to the discussion, promising that their communications shall always appear in print at as early a day as possible.

COBBETT'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 128 of the Parliamentary Debates, being the First Number of the SIXTH Volume, and of the Present Session, is ready for delivery, and may be had of the publishers, Mr. Bagshaw, Bow-Street, Covent-Garden; or Mr. Budd, Pall-Mall.—Some information respecting the mode of obtaining these Numbers appears to be necessary to persons who live at a distance from the Metropolis, and who, in many instances, seem to suppose, that they can be sent by the Post, in the same manner as the Political Register is. There is a mistake. Every Number is a Pamphlet, and can be procured only in the same manner, that Pamphlets, Reviews, and Magazines are; this is, generally, by application made to a Country Bookseller who has a direct and frequent communication with London: of which description, Booksellers are to be found in every country town of any importance.

PROSPECTUS
OF
Cobbett's Parliamentary History,

Which, in the compass of Sixteen Volumes, royal octavo, double page, is to contain a full and accurate report of all the recorded proceedings, and of all the speeches, in both Houses of Parliament, from the earliest times to the year 1803, when the publication of Cobbett's Parliamentary Debates commenced.

Whoever has had frequent occasion to recur to the proceedings in parliament, of former times, must have experienced those difficulties, which it is the object of the proposed work to remove. Merely to find the several works, wherein is contained an account of the parliamentary proceedings, is, at this day, no easy matter, some of them being very scarce, and others excessively voluminous. Hardly any of them, those of the last twenty years excepted, are to be purchased regularly at the booksellers'. The far greater part of them are to be come at by accident only; and, of course, sometimes not to be obtained at all.——But, supposing them all to be at hand, the price of them is no trifling object; and, in many cases, must present a difficulty not to be easily, or, at least, willingly, surmounted. Of these works, taken in their chronological order, the first is, the Parliamentary or Constitutional History, in 24 volumes; the second, the Oxford Debates, in 2 volumes; the third, Chandler's Debates, in 22 volumes; the fourth, Greys' Reports, in 10 volumes; the fifth, Almons' Debates, in 24 volumes; the sixth, Debrett's Debates (now in the hands of various booksellers), in 63 volumes. These works are not to be purchased, if to be purchased at all, under 110*l.* sterling. But still, with all these, the information wanted is very imperfect, without perpetually having recourse to the Journals of the two Houses, which Journals occupy upwards of a hundred volumes in folio: so that, the price of a complete set of the works, in this way, cannot, upon an average of purchases, be reckoned at less than 150 pounds.——These difficulties got over, another, and a still more formidable obstruction to the acquiring of information is found, not merely in the number and the bulk of the volumes, but also in the want of a good arrangement of the contents of most of them, and, further, in the immense load of useless matter, quite unauthentic, and very little connected with the real proceedings of parliament, to be found in many of them. In the two first-mentioned works, we find a narrative of battles, sieges, and of domestic occurrences. The real proceedings of parliament form but a comparatively small proportion of them, whole pamphlets of the day, and very long ones, being, in many places, inserted just as they were published and sold; and, when we come down even to the Debates by Almon and Debrett (taking in Woodfall and others occasionally), we find, that, in numerous instances, three-fourths of the volume consists of papers, laid before parliament, of mere momentary utility, repeated in subsequent and more correct statements, and now nothing but an expence, and, what is much worse, an incumbrance to the reader, and a constantly intervening obstacle to his researches; to which may be added, with respect to all the Debates from Almon's, inclusive, downwards, that there is a total want of all that aid, which is afforded by well contrived running-titles, tables, and indexes, and which is so necessary in every voluminous work, particularly if it relate to the transactions of a long series of years.——With a view of removing all these difficulties, and of putting the public in possession of an account of the Proceedings in Parliament previous to the year 1803, (when Cobbett's Parliamentary Debates commenced) as complete as that which has met with such general approbation in this last-mentioned work, the present publication is undertaken. The Sixteen Volumes, of which the proposed work will consist, and the first of which is now in the press, will be printed in the same form and size, and with the same sort of character, as those of the Political Register and Parliamentary Debates, with this difference only, that the character of this work will, in the same compass, introduce one-fifth more of matter. The volumes, respectively, are to embrace the periods here mentioned; to wit:

Vol. I. From the Conquest, 1066, to the meeting of the Long Parliament in 1640.

II. From the meeting of the Long

Parliament, to the death of Charles I. in 1648.

III. From the Commencement of the Commonwealth to the death of Queen Ann, in 1714.

IV. From George I. to the end of the Seventh Session of the Eighth Parliament in 1741.

V. From the New Parliament in 1741, to 1774.

VI. From the New Parliament in 1774, to its dissolution in 1780.

VII. } From the New Parliament in 1780,
VIII. } to its dissolution in 1784.

IX. } From the New Parliament in 1784,
X. } to its dissolution in 1790.

XI. } From the New Parliament in 1790,
XII. } to its dissolution in 1796.

XIII. } From the New Parliament in 1796,
XIV. } to its dissolution in 1800.

XV. From the New Parliament in 1800, to its dissolution in 1802.

XVI. From the New Parliament in 1802, to the commencement of Cobbett's Parliamentary Debates, November the 22d, 1803.

Each of these volumes will contain considerably more print than is contained in the whole of Hume's History of England, which occupies eight common octavo volumes. When, therefore, it is recollected, that so large a part of the several works, above-enumerated, are taken up with matter, as before described, wholly unconnected, or having but a very remote connection, with the proceedings in parliament, and entirely destitute of authenticity; when it is recollected also, how much room is saved by the abbreviation of words descriptive of titles and of constantly-occurring phrases of courtesy, the reader will not be surprised, that the whole of the authentic and useful records of the proceedings of the parliament of England, of that of Great Britain, and of that of the United Kingdom, down to the year 1803, will be comprised in the Sixteen Volumes of this work, which will, upon the best computation that can be made, contain as much print as 140 common octavo volumes.——In relation to the earliest times, the work will be compiled chiefly from the Records, the Rolls of of Parliament, and from the most reputable ancient writers of English History. From the reign of Henry VIII. inclusive, we have the additional aid of the Journals of the House of Lords; and from that of Edward VI. that of the Journals of the House of Commons. As to the Speeches, they will, of course, be collected from the several works, wherein, upon careful examination and comparison, they are found to have been the most fully and accurately recorded. The precise words of motions, resolutions, &c. &c. will be copied from the Journals themselves, and not from unauthorized publications. As a book of Parliamentary Precedents, the work, by the aid of its tables and indexes, will be even more complete than any one hitherto published. These tables and indexes will be constructed upon the excellent plan (with some little improvements) recommended by the Committee of the House of Commons, and afterwards adopted by the persons employed to make the indexes to the Journals.——With respect to information relative to those who have, at any time, made a conspicuous figure in parliament, or, indeed, who have been, for any considerable length of time, members of that body, it is not unnecessary to observe, that, in the parts of the work which will give an account of the assembling of the several new parliaments, since the time when records of this sort were first made, there will be complete Lists of the members of the House of Commons, and, from time to time, a state of the Peerage. These, together with an Index of Names, will enable the reader, not only to know, who has, at any time, been in parliament; but also to trace the parliamentary history and conduct of every distinguished member.——Considered as a collection of Public Papers, this work will be more complete than any one extant, in this country. It will contain Copies of all the Treaties, conventions, &c. &c. to which the rulers of this kingdom have, respectively, been parties, and which are, any where, upon record. All King's Speeches, Protests, Conferences, Standing Orders, as well as all Petitions, Remonstrances, &c. &c. will be carefully inserted, in their proper places. At the close of the Parliamentary History of each reign, in the early periods, and of every session of parliament in the latter, will be given a List of the Acts passed during its continuance; also an account of the taxes imposed, of the supplies, of the subsidies to foreign powers, of the state of the revenue, of the value of money in relation to the price of provisions. &c. To prepare the materials for a work of such magnitude must necessarily require much labour and time. Nearly two years have already been, in great part, devoted to it; and, such has been the application bestowed, that a considerable part of the whole is in a state fit for the press. The first volume is actually in the press, and will, at the latest, be published on the 15th of May next. The printer has engaged to complete it by the 1st day of that month; but, in order to avoid disappointment, a fortnight later, as the time of

delivery from the publishers' has been fixed on. The second volume will be published in August next; and, so on, a volume every quarter of a year till the whole be completed. This distance between the periods of publication will have many conveniencies attending it, and particularly that of leaving the young reader time to have gone through one volume before he has another to purchase.—— The price of each volume, containing, as was observed, more print than eight common octavo volumes, and bound in Russia leather, in the same manner as the Political Register and the Parliamentary Debates, will be 1l. 11s. 6d. which will, of course, be paid to the booksellers upon the delivery of each volume successively.——The first volume will be published at the time above fixed on, whether there be subscribers or not, and no difference will be made between the price to subscribers and to others; but, as it would be very grateful to the feelings of the compiler to see his arduous undertaking approved of and encouraged by the public, and as the number of copies, of the second volume must, of course, be regulated by the degree of success that he can reasonably count upon, he will not attempt to disguise, that he is very anxious to obtain a respectable list of subscribers at as early a period as possible.— The work will be published by Mr. BAGSHAW, Bow Street Covent Garden; and will be sold also by Mr. BUDD, Pall Mall, Mr. FAULDER, Bond Street, Messrs. BLACKS and PARRY, Leadenhall Street, and Mr. ARCHER, Dublin; to any of which persons subscribers are requested to send their names.

DEFENCE OF THE KINGDOM.

SIR;—Some apology may be expected for so hasty, incorrect, and imperfect a sketch as the following; I have only one to offer, that I think that a hint in time for the effectual defence of these islands, is at present of more value than all the studied eloquence of Cicero, or all the sounding periods of the Treasury Bench. CAMILLUS *.

Public affairs are verging fast, if not towards that point at which it becomes the duty of every good citizen not to despair of the state, at least to that situation in which it becomes his duty to call the attention of those who have undertaken the awful charge of conducting the affairs of the nation, in such circumstances to effectual means of providing for its security. Unless the course of events respecting the internal state of France, or the interests of the other powers of the Continent takes a turn, of which there can be little hope at present, it is probable that an attack upon this country is not far distant.——On reviewing not only the last, but the former campaigns of Buonaparté, it will be found that the principal cause of his success has been his great activity, and the astonishing celerity of his motions. It is far from impossible, that knowing that a great part of our force has been sent on foreign service; and supposing, that from the great distance at which he is, and the other great objects he has to fix his attention, we may allow ourselves to be off our guard; his first enterprise now may be, to hasten troops back to the coast, and to attempt an invasion of this island: the feeble representative of the Houses of Habsburg and Lorraine, was congratulating his subjects that he would soon have two hundred thousand men on the theatre of war in Suabia, at the very moment that his Suabian army was nearly annihilated——Of the two plans on which an invasion of this island may be undertaken, he seems to lay little stress on that by fleets of large ships, by which we were formerly threatened. The risk of convoying a sluggish fleet, with the time required for disembarkation, in the face of a superior navy is great, but it has a vast advantage, that of conveying any number of men in much greater security than the other against the elements. But this has been so long and so well known, that little need be said respecting it; it may however, be observed, that our administrations have often been negligent in opposing it, by sending a force only sufficient to combat the ships of war, whereas there ought always to have been enough not only for that purpose, but to destroy those under their protection. —The other mode by a vast collection of small vessels is new, unattempted, and is yet but imperfectly understood: it is, probably, more dangerous both to those who undertake it, and to those against whom it is directed. In such vessels, however proper their construction may be for the service, the danger of the elements is great. It was, I believe, first suggested to the French government, by a foreign projector who entered into their service, and who, while the affairs of the Continent engaged their attention, was afterwards, as well as his scheme, neglected; if credit may be given to the information that has been circulated since it has been resumed, it will be evident to every seaman

* The former letters of this very able and well-informed writer will be found in vol. 5, p. 422, 705; vol. 6, p. 385; and vol. 8, p. 225.

who is acquainted with naval architecture, which, however, is a knowledge more rarely combined than could easily be supposed in our navy; that a great part of them are ill adapted for the purpose, both in the construction and equipment, which fortunately adds still more to that risk. The times or rather moments in which it could be attempted with any hope of success, very seldom occur; with the most prevailing winds they cannot move, and with those which would drive our fleet from their station, they would probably perish upon this coast, even if they were able to reach it; but there are conjunctures in which it might be attempted, and there are two ways in which that attempt might be made. The whole flotilla that is said to be already collected, would probably, require three or even four days to get clear of the harbour, they might sail in divisions as they came out, if the first was intercepted, the enemy might postpone the rest, and still have the means of transporting a great force by the next opportunity; if it arrived safe, they would no doubt hazard much to reinforce it, which might prove the cause of their destruction; at the same time it would require no small exertion to annihilate such a force, before they could have another opportunity of putting to sea. If they should resolve upon the other mode, that of transporting their whole army at once, it would subject both sides to new and greater dangers. It is, I believe, the prevailing opinion, that the first divisions that go out of port, might be destroyed before they could be joined by the rest; but, though they might receive some damage, it is to be feared, that among light vessels that could be so easily moved, that could haul so close in shore, and that could in some measure be protected from the land, nothing so effectual as to stop the expedition could be done in so short a time. But it would give time for a powerful fleet to come upon the station; when embarked they would be under the necessity either of putting to sea in the face of that fleet, or returning to port: it is impossible for a great number of men to continue long on board of such vessels; they might be destroyed piecemeal by our fleet, and if they remained there till a westerly gale came on, perhaps few of them might survive it. It is, therefore, probable, that unless they saw a force that they were convinced would destroy them, and still more, which is not unlikely to be the case, if they were not sensible of the danger, that they would put to sea. It is, therefore, the most important of all points, or at least, whatever may be the opinion entertained of their getting to sea, the most prudent to provide the most effectual means of opposing them upon that element. —When the enemy first seemed to have resolved upon this mode of invasion, and some of their small vessels had eluded our ships of war, on some buccaneering expeditions, our administration thought it necessary to make use of vessels of the same class; they frittered away many of our seamen from strong and useful ships, into trifling craft which have been found of little avail even in interrupting the enemy's communication; they were even determined to trust the defence of the country to them, against the whole of the enemy's embarkation; it is a most dangerous, and would probably be a fatal error. That project of invasion has been ridiculed on account of the insignificance of the vessels of which it is composed, but seamen accustomed to seek and to conquer their most powerful naval armaments, consider their force only as relative to their own element, as such they have reason to hold it in contempt, for as such it is truly insignificant; but to fight upon that element, cannot be their object nor ought to be their intention, but to escape from our fleets with as little loss as possible; it is not to beat them there that is the difficulty, but to destroy such a multitude of vessels, and to prevent them from reaching their destination. What mischief could forty or fifty light vessels, in a passage of a few hours do to fifteen hundred or two thousand, suppose them to take an hundred with very little resistance; they cannot sink them immediately, for they are not qualified for it; they must wait to exchange the prisoners, or the prizes would again pursue their course; by that time the great body of the enemy's fleet would be beyond their reach, with a loss so trifling as hardly to be perceptible in so great an expedition. Little more is to be expected from arms; examples without number prove that the best directed force especially from ships, seldom takes effect on vessels that are so low in the water; in all the skirmishes they have had with ships of force, few of them have been sunk: even the boats of our navy in their numerous and rash attacks upon armed vessels, have rarely suffered from cannon. There is but one way of destroying so immense a number of small craft, but that is an effectual one, and that is, by the heaviest ships, for no others have weight sufficient, not chiefly by their guns, but by running them down, by a strong squadron of such ships stretching off and on through them, with light vessels to pick up those which they miss, it is probable that few would escape; and, it is upon a squadron of such ships that work well, and com-

manded by the most active and vigilant officers, being stationed so as to be able to fetch Boulogne, or wherever the rendezvous may be in a few hours, with the wind from any point of the compass, which may be effected by stationing part above and part below channel, that the safety of this country will probably depend. The victory of Trafalgar was over-rated by those who judged of its consequence by the ideas of the last century; it has been under-rated by those who looked to the restoration of Europe; it is invaluable according to the present political aspect, as it sets a large part of our naval force free for our immediate protection. Great Britain possesses within itself the means of setting the power of France great as it is at defiance, if those means were well composed, animated, and directed; but, I think no man who has the most superficial knowledge of military affairs, but must be satisfied, that before we can be placed in a state of security, the greatest part of our military force must be entirely new modelled! That is not the work of a day, nor of a year, but of years of great attention and perseverance; till that is effected we must chiefly depend for our defence upon our navy; that navy is superior in every respect to any that the world has yet seen; and, if properly employed, may save us till a solid foundation is laid to preserve these islands to witness another revolution of Europe. Aspiring and successful as France now is, if time and leisure from more pressing occupations are allowed, I expect to be able to shew rational ground for thinking that her dominion is not one of those mighty empires that overshadows the world for ages, but that it originates in corruption, and carries within itself the principles of its own fall and dissolution. And that if a part of Europe can be saved from its first convulsive shocks, civilisation and regular government may yet revive. We have the means of defence; if we exert them we have yet no reason to despond; but if they who have undertaken, and whom we have permitted to assume the direction of them, will not make a proper use of them, let them not deplore the fatality of the times If whining and cant were of any avail they might be reserved for those who have long foreseen the possibility of the approaching crisis, who have without success laboured to prevail upon them to prepare for it; and who, by the supineness and infatuation of others, are in danger of being delivered, almost bound and gagged, into the hands of the enemy.

EFFECT OF THE FUNDS.

SIR,——The baneful effects produced in the country by that system of corruption, which upholds and characterizes the administration of William Pitt; which it has been the uniform object of your valuable publication to expose; and which has never by any one been so ably exposed as by yourself, are so forcibly illustrated in this neighbourhood, that I should, sometimes, be disposed to suspect you of drawing your pictures from what is daily passing before my eyes, did I not know, as well from the testimony of others, as from my own observation, that the same dire change has gradually been effected throughout the kingdom. The place, where I reside, Sir, is a small town within 30 miles of the metropolis, equally famous for the salubrity of its air, and the beauty of its scenery. It had formerly to boast, among its inhabitants and in its vicinity, several families of distinction, who spent the greater part of the year upon their estates, maintaining in unsullied purity the venerable names of their ancestors, and endearing themselves to their neighbours, to their dependants, and to posterity, by the exercise of every generous virtue, and by the diffusion of a benign influence upon all who had the happiness to live within their sphere. In those days "a hospitality, in which there "was no luxury, and a liberality, in which "there was no ostentation," (to adopt the language of an eminent writer on political economy) formed a striking feature in the character of an English gentleman. He lived not merely for himself, but for the common benefit of mankind. The honest mechanic could look to him for patronage, and the industrious peasant for protection. Nor were their just claims ever disregarded. But, alas! Mr. Cobbett, our genuine English gentry; the

——————— "præsidium et dulce decus"

of the nation, are become almost extinct. In this place only one of our ancient families remains. The rest, swept away by an overwhelming torrent of taxes, have been succeeded by a race of loan-jobbers, nabobs, and placemen of various descriptions; a new-fangled species of gentry, in every respect the reverse of their illustrious predecessors. I will not occupy your time or your paper with a detail of all the numerous evils, to which this sad revolution has given birth. Its latent poison diffuses itself through every class of the community. Not the aristocracy only, whose mansions they invade, and whose rank they affect, but the middling and lower orders, likewise, feel an essential change in their condition. In the place of their former benefactors, they have now to contemplate a new race of men, attached to

them by none of those ties, which have hitherto created so lively an interest in all their concerns, and such a parental solicitude for their welfare; a race of men, who, born only for themselves, and destitute of every benevolent feeling, exact from them unqualified submission to their views of aggrandizement, to their schemes of interest, and to their range of pleasures. To these objects, indeed, every office, with which they are invested; how sacred soever the trust; how great soever the responsibility, is made subservient. Are they magistrates? Not the impartial administration of justice; not the faithful execution of salutary laws; not the friendly arbitration of groundless quarrels; not the defence of oppressed poverty, nor the vindication of injured innocence; none of these important prerogatives of their office, for which good men have been wont to undertake it, are suffered for a moment to stand in competition with the extension of their influence, the establishment of their power, and above all, the opportunity which it sometimes affords them of avenging themselves upon those, who have, at any time, dared to resist their sway. Are they commissioners of taxes? an office for which their talents peculiarly designate them? What a powerful engine of corruption does it become in their hands! How uniformly do they devote the inquisitorial authority, with which it arms them, to the gratification of insolent curiosity, private pique, or party malice! Are they trustees of charities? With what shameless effrontery do we see them prostituting the beneficence of the founders to the accomplishment of their own venal purposes, and defrauding the poor of those rewards of virtuous exertion, which the piety of former times had consecrated to their use, to bestow them upon their sycophants and dependants! But, the abuses, introduced by this new order of gentry, into every department of our provincial polity,

——— "Quæque ipse miserrima vidi,"

would fill a volume of no ordinary size. Yet, Sir, these are the men, who arrogate to themselves every virtue, and monopolize morality, as they do every thing else! These are the men, whose names make so prominent a figure in our *patriotic* contributions; these the *patriots*, who enlist with so much ardour in our volunteer corps. But, surely, Mr. Cobbett, that *patriotism* is of a very problematical nature, which is assumed only upon occasions and for purposes of ostentation! I am no *enemy* to patriotic contributions, though you have convinced me, that the patronage, created by the fund at Lloyd's, would flow more constitutionally in a different channel. Nor do I *condemn* volunteer associations, for I am not sufficiently acquainted with military affairs to judge of their utility, and I have, at the same time, reason to believe, that many have joined them from motives of the purest patriotism. All I assert is this, that because a man is a subscriber to the Lloyd's fund, or has enrolled his name in a volunteer corps, he is not, therefore, necessarily a patriot, in direct opposition to every principle, by which he is actuated in the whole tenor of his life. I cannot admit that men, who thrive upon the miseries of the nation, have any legitimate claim to the title. I am aware, however, that I risk the once obsolete, though recently revived, imputation of jacobinism, in avowing this opinion. But, let me ask, whether, if at this day there be any jacobins among us, they are not (I will not say to be found among, but) entirely composed of those men, whose system has such an obvious tendency to depreciate our national character, and extinguish our national spirit. Believe me, Sir, I am unwilling to despond, or to "create despondency;" but when, in spite of all our disasters, and the degrading alternative, to which we are reduced, I see selfishness in some form or other; nay, in the very guise of patriotism itself, still maintain its destructive empire in the land, I blush to own myself an Englishman. I tremble for the fate of my country. "Delenda est Carthago" has for some time past been the prevailing maxim in France. May we not, like the Carthagenians, continue besotted by the fancied security, which our commercial system has engendered, till, like them, we fall an easy prey to the enemy. If, in these times of alarm and peril, any apology be thought necessary for adverting to the fruitful cause of our calamities, and the real source of our danger. If the backneyed charges, of exciting disaffection at home, and affording encouragement to the enemy to invade our shores, be yet advanced with pertinacious audacity by the minister and his adherents, against all who assail their profligate and destructive system, I reply in the words of a celebrated female writer; herself one of those adherents. "So "to expose the weakness of the land, as to "suggest the necessity of internal improve"ment, and to point out the means of ef"fectual defence, is not treachery, but pa"triotism."——I am, Sir, your constant reader, and obedient servant.——C. B.——

Jan. 24, 1806.

FATE OF THE FUNDS.

Surely, Mr. Cobbett, you do not mean

soberly to tell us, that the extinction of the funds without remunerating the proprietors is an act of justice; or to defend reasonably a system so pregnant with anarchy and confusion. The expediency of the measure, I have nothing to do with, I only quarrel with its injustice. To take the property of another, without his consent, has heretofore been deemed a robbery, and consequently a crime punishable by the laws of every civilized state. How then can old opinions be so far *justly* set at nought, that a legal instrument shall be executed, for at once overturning the justest law of our constitution and substituting for it, the most unjust, oppressive, and cruel act, that revolutionary terrorists ever decreed? Are you not aware that the stock-holder has implicitly depended upon the faith of the parliament, and that he has always considered this property as guaranteed upon the land? Are you not aware, that should your plan be adopted, he would be obliged to seek a habitation on any man's estate that suited his fancy? and that if he was not strong enough himself, that he would call for the assistance of others in his own situation, and that *vi et armis* they would settle themselves wherever they found a land-holder unequal to oppose them? Consider, Mr. Cobbett, what consequences this would lead to; view the troops of the stock-holders in martial array, attacking the property of the land-holder, and systematically plundering him, because themselves had been plundered; and where lies the difference of the robbery? the latter rob against the law, whilst the former have been served so by the law. Robbed by the law!!! To what a state must your principle have reduced us, when the law shall be thus guilty, and I defy any one to prove that taking a man's property from him in this way, is any thing but a down-right robberey. That it is his property (though you say he never saw or felt it) their cannot be the shadow of a doubt; has he not given a valuable consideration for it? can he not sell it? does he not receive so much a year from the nation for what it cost him? has not parliament yearly provided for this? I say it has by this alone acknowledged him as a creditor, and recognised his right, his property in it, and so far has given him sufficient grounds for relying upon its faith; the faith of the British parliament hitherto considered sacred, and which has never before been attempted to be polluted. The danger of a civil war and the very idea of parliamentary dishonesty, if viewed even at a distance, would terrify us, but if to be brought immediately before us, what must be our feelings? Sooner let the country be ruined, but let its integrity survive; if we must perish, let us do so without reproach, that when the name of Britons shall hereafter be mentioned as having once been, *that they were, with honour*, and that though they might have still existed they refused the infamous means, *of sacrificing to their necessities those of their children whom lust had prompted them to beget, and nature taught to cherish and defend, not destroy.* Your argument of the stock-holder having himself foreseen and talked of this annihilation will apply against yourself. Would a man buy a house even, which he expected would sooner or later be taken from him? certainly not, how therefore can it be expected that he would purchase stock under this idea, when so many other ways of laying out his money, could be resorted to? The advantage which you say the funds enjoy over other property could never be equal to this risk; and why do they enjoy this advantage, not surely because the public has contemplated the possibility of their downfall; if it had done so, I will venture to assert, that the consequences would have been the very reverse of what they are. The faith which the public has in the honour and integrity of parliament has caused this property, which has arisen under its sanction and for its use to be nominally more valuable than any other, a certain proof that the contract betwixt the parliament as *debtor* and the public as *creditor* has been always viewed in the light which I point out to you, and that whilst it shall continue to be actuated by those principles of justice which have hitherto governed it, the public creditor need be in no fear of its resorting to a measure so criminal as the one you desire.—The pretty story of the two widows has no point in it, for in a commercial country like this, every one is at liberty to turn their property to the best account, and few will agree with your position that because *one* has by enterprize and traffic realised a greater capital than another who started with equal chances, that the whole of that property should be sequestered for the good of the state, whilst the sluggard or prudent man (I care not which) shall be secured in the safe possession of his. Forbid it justice, forbid it policy!! trade, enterprize, and spirit, if taxed in this way, would soon fly a country whose constitution was supported by such an Atlas, whose strength was oppression, security delusion, and policy injustice.—I will not further intrude upon your time by entering more at large into the subject, but merely hope if you give this a place in your Weekly Register,

that those who implicitly rely upon your dogmas, and who consequently now droop despondingly at the picture you have drawn, may yet revive, and, placing that confidence in the British parliament which it deserves, firmly rely upon its rejection of a measure, the adoption of which would sully for ever its fair name, and remain, Sir, your obedient servant, CORNELIUS.——London, Feb. 1st, 1806.

PUBLIC PAPER.

ITALY AND FRANCE.—*Letter of his Majesty the Emperor Napoleon to the French Senate, dated Munich, Jan. 12, 1806.*

Senators,—The Organic Senatus Consultum, of the 18th Floreal, or the year 12 (8th May, 1804), has provided for every thing respecting the hereditary succession of the Imperial Crown in France.—The first Constitutional Statute of our Kingdom of Italy, dated March 19, 1805, has fixed the inheritance of that Crown on our descendants, in a direct and legitimate line, whether natural, or by adoption.*—The dangers to which we have been exposed in the midst of the war, and which were exaggerated to our people of Italy—those to which we may still be exposed in combating the enemies who yet remain to France, still excite very sensible alarms. The people of Italy do not enjoy the security, offered them by the liberality and the moderation of our laws, because the future is to them uncertain.—We have considered it as one of our present duties to put a period to these alarms.—We have in consequence determined to adopt as our son, Prince Eugene, Arch-Chancellor of our Empire, and Viceroy of our kingdom of Italy. We have called him, next to ourselves and our natural and legitimate children, to the throne of Italy; and we have decreed, that in default of our direct descendants, legitimate or natural, or those of Prince Eugene, our son, the Crown of Italy shall devolve to the son, or the nearest relative to our Princes of the blood, who in such case may then reign in France.—We have thought it befitting our dignity, that Prince Eugene shall enjoy all the honours attached to our adoption, though they will give him no right but to the Crown of Italy alone; it being understood, that our adoption will in no case nor circumstance authorise either him or the descendants of Prince Eugene, to raise any claim to the Crown of France, the succession of which is irrevocably regulated by the constitutions of the Empire.—The history of all ages informs us, that the uniformity of laws is essentially prejudicial to the strength and good organization of empires, when they extend beyond the limits allowed by the moral habits and geographical considerations.—We reserve to ourselves the opportunity of publishing our ulterior dispositions, respecting the connexions which are to subsist after us, among all the Federative Estates of the French Empire. The various independent parties among them, having a common interest, must have a common tie.—Our people of Italy will receive, with transports of joy, these new testimonies of our solicitude. They will perceive in them the guarantee of the happiness they enjoy, in the permanence of the Government of this young Prince, who, in an interval of stormy agitation, and particularly in the first moments, so difficult even for men of experience, has known how to govern by the affections, and to endear to them our laws.—He has never ceased to offer us a spectacle, which has strongly interested us. We have seen him in new situations, reducing those principles to practice, whsch we had studied to inculcate in his mind and in his heart, all the while he was under our inspection. When it was necessary to defend our people of Italy, he shewed himself equally worthy of imitating and renewing whatever we might have atchieved in the difficult art of war.—At the same moment that we have ordained that our fourth Constitutional Statute should be communicated to the three Colleges of Italy, it has appeared to us to be indispensible not to defer for an instant, the instruction necessary for the dispositions which establish the prosperity and duration of the Empire, in the love and the interest of the nations which compose it. We have thus been persuaded, that every thing that is to us a subject of happiness and joy cannot be indifferent to you, or to our people. (Signed) NAPOLEON.

MARET.

* Art. II. The Crown of Italy is hereditary in the direct and legitimate line, whether natural or adopted, from male to male, to the perpetual exclusion of females and their descendants, still providing that the right of adoption cannot be extended to any one who is not a Citizen of the French Empire, or the Kingdom of Italy.—Constitutional Statute of the Kingdom of Italy of the 19th March, 1805.

Printed by Cox and Baylis, No. 75, Great Queen Street, and published by R. Bagshaw, Bow Street, Covent Garden, where former Numbers may be had; sold also by J. Budd, Crown and Mitre, Pall-Mall.